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Exploration and Discovery

From London, whither he has now returned, Petrie writes:

We were in Sinai all the season [1904-5], and I there cleared the temple of Serabit el-Khadem, and found that it was entirely on Semitic lines, and not Egyptian. A great mass of burnt offerings in front of the cave shrine, a crowd of Bethel pillars on the hill around, two *hanafiye* courts like a mosque, and a system of pilgrim chambers are all un-Egyptian. This is from the Twelfth to the Twentieth Dynasty [2000-1200 B. C.]. We have brought away about fifty small stelæ, etc., and copied hundreds of inscriptions. There will be an Egypt Exploration Fund extra volume of inscriptions, and a popular volume of views and discussions of Sinai, issued by myself.

A letter from Professor Steindorff, of Leipzig, reports the success of his excavations in the great cemetery of Gizeh. He has been employing about four hundred workmen, who have thus far uncovered fifty masonry tombs of stone or brick. One can now walk about the streets of this section of the great city of tombs at Gizeh, and enter the cultus or chapel chambers in which the surviving relatives offered food and drink to their dead five thousand years ago. The shafts leading down through the superstructure are sometimes ten or even fifteen meters deep, cut into the rock. Below—that is, at the lower end of the shaft—is a small chamber, in which the deceased was laid to rest. The skeletons had mostly perished. The majority of the tombs date from the third millennium B. C. They contained a great number of specimens of Egyptian art, especially of well-preserved stone figures, very true to life, depicting functionaries, officials, servants, cooks, beer-brewers, butchers, and bakers.

Several reports of the results of the remarkable discoveries of Legrain at Karnak last year have now appeared: one in the *Chronique des arts*, of Paris; and a summary of the historical result by Legrain himself in Maspero's *Recueil de travaux*. The *cache* has now yielded: 457 statues and statuettes, 15 stelæ of granite and alabaster, 8 Osiris statues, 7 sphinxes, 6 magnificent vases of alabaster, and innumerable fragments. Especially valuable are a gold ring of Queen Nofretete, wife of Ikhnaton (Amenhotep IV), the great revolutionizer of Egyptian religion; a statue of King Taharka, the Tirhaka of the Old Testament, in gold-bronze; an Osiris statue in bronze over five feet high. The finest pieces have already reached Cairo, and are being installed in the great museum.

The excavations of Naville and Hall have continued at Der el-Bahri (Thebes), in order to complete the clearance of the Eleventh Dynasty temple which they found there. They have pushed the excavations down the axis toward the cliffs, and have found what seems to be the base of a pyramid at the rear. The temple is interesting as the oldest building at Thebes, dating, as it does, back of 2000 B. C., and being the earliest example of the terraced type.

The magnificent mortuary furniture found by Mr. Theodore M. Davis at Thebes, in the tomb of Tuya and Yuya, the parents of Queen Tiye (1400 B. C.), proves to be of such extent, beauty, and splendor as to be unprecedented in the history of Egyptian excavation. It furnishes a new chapter in the art of this gorgeous age, when the empire of the Pharaohs was at its zenith, and will enable us for the first time adequately to depict the splendor of the Pharaonic palaces in the time of Amenhotep III, the Louis XV of early Egypt.

At the session of the Anthropologische Gesellschaft recently held in Berlin, Dr. Max Blanckenhorn—doubtless the best-informed specialist on the geography, geology, and physiography of Syria-Palestine—called attention to a much-neglected field of study in those lands, viz., the traces of prehistoric man to be found there, in the form of flint implements and artefacts of many kinds. No collection of such materials from Syria-Palestine exists in Europe, and the Berlin museums, so rich in anthropological collections, exhibit no specimens from there. On a recent exploring trip through the country, Dr. Blanckenhorn gave the matter much attention, and found that the flint implements of prehistoric man exist in Syria-Palestine in great numbers. He collected many specimens, of which he exhibited a considerable number to the Society. His researches led him to the conclusion that the invasion of the Israelites in the middle of the thirteenth century brought iron, hitherto unknown, into Palestine. Possibly eight hundred years earlier, bronze had been introduced there; but back of that event only stone implements were known. Accepting the rather arbitrary classification of the anthropologists, Dr. Blanckenhorn found eolithic, paleolithic, and neolithic flints in his collection, the oldest of which he thought probably dated back to some five thousand years B. C. These conclusions of Dr. Blanckenhorn must now, of course, be compared and correlated with the information obtainable from the inscriptions, with which his data are at variance in a number of important particulars. We are very much indebted to Dr. Blanckenhorn, however, for the interest he has shown in this neglected field of oriental research, and it is to be hoped that this successful beginning which he has made, may result in arousing

the interest and attention of students and travelers in Syria-Palestine. A few years of industrious collecting by visitors there, each specimen discovered being carefully marked as to locality and immediate environment, with full list of accompanying objects (if any), would enable us to test the tentative results of Dr. Blanckenhorn, to make the necessary modifications, and ultimately to arrive at approximately final conclusions as to the age of man in Palestine, and the length and character of his prehistoric career there.

J. H. B.



SCARAB OF AMENHOTEP III.